

Ellie's Viking Discovery

Learning objective: To understand the origins and lifestyle of the Vikings during the Anglo-Saxon period.

Read the passage carefully and answer the questions below in full sentences.

Ellie the elephant loves to dig into the past. Today, she is learning about the Vikings, who arrived in Britain during the late 8th century. They travelled across the North Sea from Scandinavia in longships. These clever boats were designed with a shallow base, allowing them to sail up narrow rivers and land directly on beaches. At first, many Vikings came to Britain to raid monasteries for gold and treasures. However, as time passed, many decided to stay. They traded goods, farmed the land, and built wooden longhouses. These houses were long and narrow with a central hearth for cooking and warmth. Viking life was not just about fighting; they were skilled craftspeople who made beautiful jewellery, combs from antler, and sturdy tools. They brought new ideas, names for our towns, and even words we still use today. By looking at buried artefacts, historians like Ellie can piece together the story of how these seafaring people changed Britain forever.

Word bank: longship · scandinavia · raid · settlement · artefact · longhouse

1. Where did the Vikings travel from before they arrived in Britain? (1 mark)

2. What were the two main features of a Viking longhouse? (2 marks)

3. Why was the design of the Viking longship useful for their travels? (2 marks)

4. How did the Vikings' reasons for coming to Britain change over time? (2 marks)

5. Do you think the Vikings were more than just raiders? Explain your answer using evidence from the text. (3 marks)

Draw: Draw a Viking longship arriving at a sandy beach, including details like the dragon-head prow and a striped sail.



Extension challenge: Research three words in the English language that have Viking (Old Norse) origins and explain what they mean.